

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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E.O. 11652 NA

TAGS: AORG, UN, AFDROUGHT

SUBJ: NEW ZEALAND ASSISTANCE TO SAHEL DROUGHT

FOLLOWING IS PRESS RELEASE PROVIDED BY NEW ZEALAND
MISSION TO THE UN, DATED FEBRUARY 28, WHICH INDICATES
NEW ZEALAND TO PROVIDE NZ\$100,000 (APPROX. US\$148,000)
TO DROUGHT STRICKEN AREAS OF THE SAHEL.

QTE:

THE NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENT IS TO GIVE PROTEIN FOOD
TO A VALUE OF NZ\$100,000 (APPROXIMATELY US\$148,000) TO

THE DROUGHT-STRICKEN AREAS OF THE SUDANO-SAHELIAN REGION
OF NORTH-WEST AFRICA. THIS WAS ANNOUNCED TODAY BY THE
ASSOCIATE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF NEW ZEALAND,
THE HON. J.A. WALDING.

MR WALDING SAID THAT THE GIFT WAS IN RESPONSE TO A JOINT
APPEAL TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY BY THE SECRETARY-
GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF
THE FAO. "THIS APPEAL MAKES IT CLEAR THAT THE SITUATION IN
THE SUDANO-SAHELIAN REGION IS NOT EXPECTED TO IMPROVE SIG-
NIFICANTLY FOR A LONG TIME YET AND THAT RELIANCE ON INTER-
NATIONAL RELIEF ASSISTANCE WILL CONTINUE UNTIL AT LEAST
THE END OF 1974", SAID MR WALDING. "RECENT REPORTS FROM
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THE FIELD HAVE REINFORCED THAT ASSESSMENT. WHAT ARE NOW

REQUIRED ARE FOOD AND CASH. IN THE EARLY MONTHS OF THE DISASTER THE PRINCIPAL REQUIREMENT WAS TRANSPORT. PARTICULARLY AIRCRAFT, WHICH WAS NOT EASILY PROVIDED FROM NEW ZEALAND. BUT NOW WE ARE IN A POSITION TO HELP AND WE PROPOSE TO DO SO, JUST AS WE DID RECENTLY IN THE SIMILAR ETHIOPIAN SITUATION."

MR WALDING SAID THAT HE WAS NOT ABLE TO SAY WITH ANY PRECISION WHAT KIND OF FOOD NEW ZEALAND WOULD SUPPLY. "THE UNITED NATIONS APPEAL MADE PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE NEED FOR 'PROTECTIVE' PROTEIN FOOD FOR CHILDREN, NURSING MOTHERS AND THE ELDERLY, WHOSE CONDITION IT DESCRIBED AS CRITICAL, AND IT SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED MILD POWDER. BUT IT IS MY EXPERIENCE THAT IN THESE SORTS OF SITUATIONS NEEDS CHANGE AND FLUCTUATE AND IT MAY BE THAT BY NOW SOME OTHER KIND OF FOOD IS REQUIRED AT THE PRESENT TIME."

MR. WALDING SAID THAT HE WAS SURE THAT ALL NEW ZEALANDERS WOULD WELCOME THE GOVERNMENT'S ACTION. "WE MUST ALL HOPE THAT IT WILL, IN SOME MEASURE AT LEAST, HELP TO RELIEVE THE SUFFERING AND DISTRESS OF THESE UNFORTUNATE PEOPLE," HE SAID IN CONCLUSION.

NEW ZEALAND MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK.
28 FEBRUARY 1974 UNQTE.
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